

COMSTOCK HOMES DEVELOPMENT AND ELLWOOD MESA OPEN SPACE PLAN FEIR

4.8 MINERAL RESOURCES

Section 4.8

4.8.1 Existing Conditions

Mineral
Resources

4.8.1.1 Overview

On July 25, 2003, the City of Goleta issued a Notice of Preparation for an EIR for the Comstock Homes Development site, Goleta Unified School District site, and the proposed Ellwood Mesa Open Space Plan components within the jurisdiction of the City. As part of this Notice of Preparation, a preliminary list of potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project was reviewed. As stated in the Notice of Preparation, the proposed project is not expected to cause impacts to mineral resources.

Historically, oil and gas operations have occurred in the vicinity of the residential development and Open Space Plan areas under the City of Goleta's jurisdiction, as summarized in the following section.

4.8.1.2 Historical and Current Oil and Gas Operations

Historically, the Ellwood oil field was once one of the most productive oil fields in the area. The discovery well for the area was drilled in 1928 and it produced clean, high-grade oil. The peak productive life of the field was reportedly between 1928 and 1931. Oil and gas produced from the wells was stored in aboveground tanks until ready to be processed. Pipelines transported the oil to the Barnsdall Oil Company oil and gas plant, where it was distilled into gasoline. Gasoline was transported via pipeline to an offshore loading dock and then onto tankers. Gasoline was also transported to the Barnsdall gas station on Hollister Avenue; the gasoline was likely transported by pipeline, however, there is no readily available information regarding the historical operations, and recent investigations of the property did not identify pipelines between these facilities. The onshore production sites in the project area were closed many years ago.

The Coal Oil Point Reserve (COPR) Expansion Area portion of the overall COPR site, which is located southeast of Ellwood Mesa, has been used for oil production, storage, and shipping operations since the 1920s. Arco previously operated an oil/natural gas-processing unit on the 0.35-acre Bishop Tank Farm lease in the southwest portion of the site. The processing unit was built in the early 1970s and was operational until 1987 when it was dismantled.

The Ellwood Marine Terminal has been operational since the early 1930s and consists of a network of former and active tanks, pipelines, roads, buildings, ponds/sumps, and other oil-related ancillary facilities. The Ellwood Marine Terminal is operated by Venoco, Inc. Currently, the facility receives and stores crude oil processed at Venoco's Ellwood Onshore Facility, located approximately 1.5 miles west of the Ellwood Marine Terminal. The Ellwood Marine Terminal periodically transfers processed crude oil to an offshore loading point for barge transport to regional refineries. The Ellwood Marine Terminal previously occupied a 40-acre leasehold on the property; the lease has been reduced in size and is currently a 17.56-acre parcel. This facility is scheduled to be removed when the current lease with the University expires.

COMSTOCK HOMES DEVELOPMENT AND ELLWOOD MESA OPEN SPACE PLAN FEIR

Section 4.8

Mineral Resources

In addition, California State Lands Commission lease PRC 421 historically tapped the Ellwood Oil Field from wells located on the beach near Venoco's Ellwood Onshore Facility. Venoco has an application pending for the resumption of production from this lease. The application was deemed incomplete by the County Energy Division staff in November 2001.

In summary, no known economically recoverable mineral resources are located within the residential development or Open Space Plan area under the jurisdiction of the City of Goleta (Santa Barbara County Energy Division, 1998). The boundaries of the Ellwood oil field and other gas fields are within and in the vicinity of the project area; however, the onshore portions of these sites are no longer used for petroleum or gas extraction. Oil and gas extraction in the South Ellwood oil field, a separate reservoir, still occurs offshore. For additional information on the past and current Ellwood oil field activities, including active and inactive oil and gas pipelines in the project area, refer to Section 4.5, Hazards and Hazardous Materials.

4.8.2 Regulatory Framework

The California Geological Survey is the state agency responsible for inventorying and mapping mineral resources in California. As determined in numerous other CEQA documents produced for other projects in this region, at this time there are no economically recoverable mineral resources located within the proposed residential development and Open Space Plan areas under the jurisdiction of the City of Goleta. Regulations pursuant to the California Geological Survey mineral resource determinations are generally linked with General Plan Land Use Elements and other types of local/regional development policies, but these regulations would not be triggered by the proposed project.

4.8.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

The proposed Comstock Homes Development and Ellwood Mesa Open Space Plan project is not expected to impact mineral resources and no mitigation is required.

4.8.4 Cumulative Impacts

No cumulative impacts have been identified for mineral resources.